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# REPORT

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

FALL 1986

## HSUS LAUNCHES DRIVE AGAINST COCKFIGHTING

Despite giant strides in the animal-welfare movement, cockfighting is a persistent evil that continues to exist. The general public often thinks that cruelty to chickens is nothing to get excited about and, unfortunately, some humane societies do not voice their protest because these bloody events are difficult to stop.

The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office has made cockfighting a priority program and is committed to stopping it within the region. Director Bill Meade states, "As long as fathers teach their sons that pitting birds against each other in violent combat to the death is OK, the children will never understand the evil of even greater cruelties."

Our program to stop cockfighting includes three specific approaches. First, we will inform the public about the issue, and encourage people to spread our message to friends and neighbors. Second, we will seek out legislators willing to stand up and fight this cruelty to animals. Our federal government already has outlawed animal fighting. It is important now for all states to specifically



*A police SWAT team, working cooperatively with The HSUS, raids another cockfight in Nueces County, Texas. Eighty-six roosters were rescued.*

cally prohibit cockfighting and then enforce the law. Third, our field investigator, Bernie Weller, will work actively with the state police and local law enforcement officials to infiltrate and bust major cockfighting operations. A recent raid in Texas, which was instigated by The HSUS, resulted in the arrest of 39 people.

We are asking our members to call or write their own state legislators. Ask these legislators to sponsor or co-sponsor an anti-cockfighting bill. All representatives who respond should be put in touch with our office.

With your help in this multi-faceted approach, we can succeed in eliminating this horrendous activity which is the cause of great animal suffering.

### INSIDE

- Animals Suffer in Mexican Shipments
- 1080 Poison Opposed
- Wagon Train Agony
- Charro Rodeo Cruelty

### San Antonio Needs Better Animal Control

For over ten years the city animal-control agency in San Antonio has used hot carbon monoxide from an engine to kill shelter animals. The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office has repeatedly urged and coaxed the city to improve this situation. Unfortunately, no change was made.

This past summer, a local TV reporter, Ed Gonzalez, telecast pictures of screaming animals dying in the hot, smoke-filled chambers. Things began to change then. The City Council held an emergency meeting and decided that all euthanasia be done by humane injection. Later, under pressure from the city health director, the Council wisely retracted its decision and hearings were held to choose the "best" method of euthanasia.

Testimony by HSUS Director Dr. Amy Freeman Lee, Gulf States Director Bill Meade, local humane societies, and other veterinary euthanasia experts built a solid case for injection as the least costly, most humane method. Unfortunately, the majority of the Council disregarded the facts, allowing themselves to be swayed by political considerations. The Council's weak, final decision was to purchase and use a new gas chamber along with occasional, limited use of injections. After ten years, San Antonio's animal control is still a far cry from making the improvements that are so sorely needed.



*Two roosters, deadly, sharp "gaffs" strapped to their legs, slash at each other until one dies or cannot continue the fight.*

—Corpus Christi Caller Times

—HSUS

# Sheep and Goats Suffer Cruelly on Way to Mexico

The Gulf States office is currently helping the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) to gather information on the physical condition of sheep and goats being shipped to Mexico. Truckloads of these animals are in transit to Mexico for as long as three days, usually without food, water, or rest. Many have injuries, or are suffering health problems. It is not uncommon for female sheep or goats to give birth en route to Mexican slaughterhouses.

Our investigator, Bernie Weller, traveled to Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Laredo (ports of entry into Mexico) to observe shipment procedures. He found many abuses at the quarantine stations and

holding pens of the private shipping companies. Here, the condition of many animals seemed worse. Weller observed broken legs, legs with no hooves, and females with teats hanging by a piece of skin. These suffering animals had passed the inspection of a Mexican veterinarian who cleared them for import into his country.

The HSUS wants to pass federal legislation to prohibit the shipment of sick or injured sheep and goats to Mexico. Towards that end, the Society is talking with congressmen and others in Washington to generate interest and support for a federal law that would eliminate animal abuse in live shipments across international borders.



*Herds of thousands of sheep and goats are exported to Mexico without any standards of care for injured and sick animals. U.S. ranchers seem to be selling Mexico the worst of their herds. In many cases, even the slaughter of these animals, which finally ends their suffering, will not be done humanely.*

## Oklahoma Enacts Spay-Neuter Law

Oklahoma now has the distinction of having the most progressive and far-reaching spay-neuter law within our region. After a three-year effort by Oklahoma humanitarians and The HSUS, this bill recently became law.

The new law requires that all animals adopted from shelters be spayed or neutered within a specified time. There is also a requirement that the pet's owner sign a legal contract and pay a

deposit at the time of adoption. Deposits collected but not used must be utilized in other spay-neuter programs. Enforcement provisions are included to help ensure the law's effectiveness. As with all good legislation, its success will depend on the support and willingness of animal shelters to implement its provisions.

This law is the first victory for the Oklahoma Humane Legislative Committee. The group was organized by the Gulf States office to promote good animal-protection bills. We are confident this is just the first of many victories for this fine, new organization.

## Director's Comment

BY BILL MEADE



Self-examination is one of the hallmarks of a wise person. On the other hand, rationalization is practiced by many who cause cruelty to animals. The "sport hunter," for example, rationalizes that he kills animals to save them from starvation. The scientist rationalizes that he inflicts pain on animals to save humans from suffering or death. In all our affairs, great and small, we tend to rationalize wrong behavior by telling ourselves there is a good reason for committing the particular act.

If we are willing to reject rationalization and practice self-examination, we must first be sure we are not ourselves cruel to animals while condemning others. It is easy to see the barbarism of the dog- and cockfighter. But what about our own cruelty to animals? Albert Schweitzer said, "No one may shut his eyes and think the pain, which is therefore not visible to him, is nonexistent."

Have we allowed our own pets to breed, while other surplus pets die in shelters, rationalizing that we "found good homes for ours"? Do we attend rodeos or other abusive animal events and rationalize that we are just a spectator and not really involved? Do we take part in or condone killing wild animals because it's called fun or tradition? Are we afraid to speak out on behalf of animals because people may think we are sentimental? And, finally, are we a party to the massive cruelty to animals involved in the raising, transporting, and slaughtering of animals for food, and the painful use of animals in biomedical research and testing?

We must continue to fight cruelty, but we also need to examine our own actions and open our eyes to the "invisible pain" around us. Practicing what we preach can make all of us vastly more effective in our efforts to help suffering animals.

# HSUS Fights 1080 Poison

Sheep and goat ranchers in our region insist they must be allowed to poison coyotes to protect their herds from attack. In 1972, the highly dangerous poison Compound 1080 was outlawed, but ranchers continued to buy and use it illegally. Now, Texas is attempting to make its use legal again.

The HSUS recently mailed an Action Alert to Texas members, which prompted hundreds of letters to Governor Mark White, protesting the state's plan. The Governor responded by saying a "careful study" will be made before use of the poison is allowed. Although the Texas Department of Agriculture has not said so publicly, we know they are interested in allowing use of the poison. By the time you read this *Report*, Compound 1080 may al-

ready be in use legally.

Compound 1080 is so deadly, a single teaspoon can kill 100 adult men. The poison is ecologically dangerous and produces horrible suffering and death in any animal or person who consumes it. It is unthinkable to use such a destructive substance on our lands.

Because of your letters to the Governor, the state was forced to delay its plan to spread this poison. We believe, however, they are just waiting until the outcry dies down before officially deciding to allow 1080.

Let Governor Mark White know that we won't stand still for the indiscriminate poisoning of lands in our state. Write today to The Honorable Mark White, State Capitol Building, Austin, Texas 78711.

## Animal Train Touted While Horses Suffer

It has been a torturous trip for many animals traveling throughout Texas in the Texas Sesquicentennial Wagon Train. Bernie Weller, our field investigator, found many of the horses in very poor condition. Most were not conditioned to perform such a long and grueling trip. The veterinarian traveling with the wagon train has stated many injuries were due to stress. Some problems were corrected, others were not. Our investigator observed some were "foot-sore" from walking on cement and asphalt for long periods of time while others had bleeding collar-and-harness sores.

We received many complaints from knowledgeable horse people who watched the wagon train pass. They judged that the horses were overworked and in poor shape for such long, daily trips. Several humane societies along the long route monitored the progress of the wagon train and gave assistance to the animals, when possible. Unfortunately, halting the event was an impossibility. The wagon train ended in Fort Worth, Texas, on July 4. Ironically, it was Independence Day for people, but just another day of exploitation for animals.



*The Sesquicentennial Wagon Train was heralded by the press as a "courageous act" by those taking part in the long, boring trip. Suffering of the hardworking animals was ignored. The trip proved nothing except to highlight, one more time, how little concerned some owners are about the welfare and humane use of their animals.*

## Around The Region

■ HOUSTON, TEXAS—The Houston Animal Rights Team (HART) intervened on behalf of a large, black lab named Jo-Jo who was shot in the face by a city policeman. The city shelter provided no treatment for Jo-Jo until HART stepped in and offered to help. Jo-Jo is now doing fine.

■ WACO, TEXAS—A new, reduced-fee spay/neuter program has been started by the Animal Aid Humane Society. Local veterinarians are cooperating by offering the reduced-cost service to indigent clients.

■ MUSTANG, OKLAHOMA—Thanks to a new, concerned animal-control officer, Jim King, and the financial help of Volunteers for Animal Welfare, Inc., the Mustang city shelter has been renovated and a veterinarian will perform humane euthanasia.

■ RUSTON, LOUISIANA—The Lincoln Humane Society held its first rabies clinic this past summer. Sixty-five pets were vaccinated and the society is now seeking active members and supporters to expand its activities.

*Note: Ever wonder why your group's great activities never appear in this column? It may be because we don't receive your newsletter! Check to be sure we are on your mailing list. Many thanks!*

## HSUS Protest Stops Greased Pig Contest

Hotels are often guilty of staging exploitative animal events to attract publicity. The HSUS has opposed bear wrestling, turtle racing events, and, most recently, a greased pig contest held at a Holiday Inn on Padre Island, Texas.

Greased pig contests often result in injury to the small pigs used in these events. Contestants pounce on the animals, trying to catch them, and the only purpose is to provide laughs for people.

Your Gulf States office protested the greased pig contest planned by the Holiday Inn on Padre Island. We were assured no such abusive events would be held in the future. We contacted the Chairman of the Board of Holiday Inns and urged him to adopt a policy of discouraging such events at Holiday Inns nationwide.

# Charro Rodeos Under Attack

The Gulf States Regional Office, working with the Bexar County Humane Society, has been investigating the Mexican charro rodeo. This rodeo, held in San Antonio, Texas, has a multitude of events that cause animal suffering. In one event, a steer is released from a chute, and a cowboy contestant grabs its tail. The cowboy's horse then turns away in a movement that twists the steer's tail and throws the animal to the ground. This kind of heavy fall can and does cause injuries to the steer.

In another event horses are roped by the front feet at a full gallop. *Result:*

the horse is slammed violently to the ground on its back and sides, and these same animals are used time after time.

The HSUS has been in contact with the Bexar County District Attorney's Office, asking that legal action be taken under the anti-cruelty statutes against the charro rodeo association. The district attorney, however, has said that the Texas anti-cruelty law is "not clear." Meanwhile, the investigator for the Bexar County Humane Society has agreed also to file a complaint and we hope these legal actions will be enough to halt these inhumane events.



—Bobby Sanchez/San Antonio Light

*Charro rodeo events would never be held on a well-run ranch because good cattlemen protect their stock from injury. Exactly the opposite happens in charro rodeos when participating animals are forced to risk injury and even death.*

## The Humane Society of the United States

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## Reflect for a moment....

HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS EVEN WHEN I NO LONGER SHARE THEIR WORLD?

By your bequest for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States.

Your will can provide for animals after you're gone.

Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthens the Society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

**Please send will information to**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP code \_\_\_\_\_

Mail in confidence to Murdaugh S. Madden, Vice President/General Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

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The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office serves Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. All contributions made to The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office are tax-deductible. The office operates Monday through Friday and is closed on federal holidays.

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